

DECISION RECORD

EA Number: **AZ-040-EA-04-12**
BLM Office: Safford District

Decision: It is my decision to select the proposed action described in the attached environmental assessment. The proposed action consolidates and modifies decisions made in the Safford and Phoenix Districts Resource Management Plans. The proposed action identifies additional public lands to be considered for disposal, lands for retention, lands desired for acquisition and deletes some lands previously identified for acquisition. This will allow the BLM to consider several exchanges that may benefit wildlife, threatened and endangered species, riparian areas, and the tax base in several counties.

Alternatives Considered: Only one alternative was considered: the No Action Alternative.

Rationale for Decision: The selection of the proposed action is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on the human environment. Selection of this alternative will allow the BLM to consider several exchange proposals and may accelerate the repositioning of federal lands in the Safford District. Repositioning of federal land may have beneficial impacts on wildlife, threatened and endangered species, riparian areas and the tax base of several counties. The environmental and economic impacts of individual land actions will be analyzed in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The final disposition of these lands will depend on the results of the analysis conducted in these documents.

Compliance and Monitoring: The BLM Safford District staff is responsible for all compliance and monitoring on the public lands within the Safford District.

Terms/Conditions/Stipulations: All land exchanges, disposals, or acquisitions will be analyzed in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement prior to completion of the lands action.

Recommended By:


District Manager

9-7-94
Date

Approved By:


State Director

9-12-94
Date

Dear Public Land User:

Enclosed is the Land Tenure Amendment and environmental assessment to the Safford District Resource Management Plan. The environmental assessment addresses issues raised by BLM staff, the public and other state and federal agencies during the scoping process. Written and verbal scoping comments were accepted for a 30 day period ending February 5, 1994.

The need for this amendment to the Safford District Resource Management Plan is generated by the creation of a third resource area, changes in District boundaries, adjustment of resource area boundaries, designation of wilderness areas, consideration of rivers and streams for Wild and Scenic designation and tentative proposals by the private sector to acquire or exchange lands within the District.

The resource management planning process includes an opportunity for administrative review via a protest to the BLM's Director if you believe the approval of this amendment would be in error (see 43 CFR 1610.5-2). Careful adherence to these guidelines will assist in preparing a protest that will assure consideration of your concerns.

In order to be considered timely your protest must be postmarked by September 2, 1994.

Protest must be sent to:

Director (760)
Bureau of Land Management
1849 "C" Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Sincerely:

William T. Civish
District Manager

FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EA No. AZ-040-04-12

**LAND TENURE AMENDMENT TO THE SAFFORD DISTRICT
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management
Safford District
711 14th Avenue
Safford, Arizona
85546

July 21, 1994

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1. MAP 27 (AMENDED)
2. COMMENT LETTERS

INTRODUCTION

The Safford District Resource Management Plan was initiated in 1988 and completed, with the exception of several unresolved protests, in 1992. The portion of the Resource Management Plan addressing land tenure was adopted in the partial record of decision signed by the State Director in September 1992.

During the preparation of the Resource Management Plan Safford District experienced significant change. A third resource area was created by adjusting the boundaries of the two existing resource areas, adjusting the District boundary to include lands formerly administered by the Phoenix District, and acquiring lands around Cienega Creek. Seven wilderness areas and one riparian national conservation area were designated in the District by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. The Wild and Scenic Rivers assessment process was initiated on segments of nine rivers in the District. Development of mineral resources found on patented and unpatented mining claims within the District were unexpectedly initiated.

These changes have significantly altered the focus of public land management in the District and require a reassessment of public lands identified for retention/disposal and private lands identified for acquisition.

PURPOSE/NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of this amendment to the Safford District Resource Management Plan is to:

1. Modify the land tenure decisions for public lands within the District made in the Safford District Resource Management Plan. Specifically this amendment will identify additional lands for potential disposal, lands for retention, lands desired for acquisition and delete some lands previously identified for acquisition.

2. Include land tenure decisions for lands in the proposed Cienega Creek Long Term Management Area.

3. Incorporate the land tenure decisions made in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan for public lands transferred to Safford District into the Safford District Resource Management Plan. These decisions are unchanged and will not be reanalyzed in this amendment.

The need for this amendment to the Safford District Resource Management Plan is generated by the creation of a third resource area, changes in District boundaries, adjustment of resource area

boundaries, designation of wilderness areas, consideration of rivers and streams for Wild and Scenic designation and tentative proposals by the private sector to acquire or exchange lands within the District.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSED ACTION

The following description of the proposed action will replace Management Concern 2- Lands and Realty, in the Safford District Resource Management Plan. It will also modify Issue 1-Land Tenure Adjustments in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan for those lands transferred to the Safford District into the Safford District Resource Management Plan.

Management Concern 2 - Lands and Realty

The public lands are used by the private sector for a variety of purposes including recreation, mining, grazing, powerlines, oil pipelines and telecommunication sites. Authorization of these activities takes careful planning to ensure that significant adverse impacts to other resource values and uses do not occur. The following questions were analyzed in the planning process.

1. Which public lands should be sold or exchanged to improve BLM land and resource management efficiency and to provide for the future needs of the public and local communities?
2. What types of lands should BLM acquire through exchange or purchase to support its resource management programs?
3. Which lands should be retained in public ownership to be managed for their various values in a combination that will best serve the needs of the public?

The following actions will be implemented to resolve the Lands and Realty Management Concern.

Long Term Management Areas (LTMA)

Designate 24 Long-Term Management Areas (LTMA) in which the Bureau of Land Management will intensively manage public lands for their multiple resource values as defined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. (See Table 2-1 and Map 27 (amended)) The BLM will retain all public land (surface and subsurface estate) and may seek acquisition of state land within these areas.

Private land acquisition within the 24 Long-Term Management Areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An analytical process will be conducted prior to acquiring private lands within these areas. This process will address the question, "Is it likely the Bureau can achieve its management objectives in the

Long-Term Management Area by means other than acquisition of "fee simple title to private land?" The four alternatives that will be considered are (1), land owner education, (2), entering into Cooperative Management Agreements, (3), partial acquisition such as conservation easements, and (4), full "fee simple title" acquisition. Acquisitions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will consider economic impacts as well as natural resource impacts.

Table 2-1
Long Term Management Areas
Bureau of Land Management, Safford District, Arizona

GILA RESOURCE AREA

Aravaipa Ecosystem
North Santa Teresa
Northwest Gila Valley
Southwest Gila Valley
Gila Box Ecosystem
Cactus Flat

SAN SIMON RESOURCE AREA

San Simon Valley
Dos Cabezas Mountains
Guadalupe Canyon
Willcox Playa

TUCSON RESOURCE AREA

San Pedro Riparian National
Conservation Area
Mule Mountains
Cascabel
San Manuel
Mammoth
Dudleyville
Muleshoe
Copper Creek
Cienega Creek
Baboquivari
Silver Bell
Picacho Mountains
Tortilita Mountains
Sawtooth Mountains

Land Ownership Adjustment - The purpose of the program is to adjust land tenure in the Safford District to achieve Bureau resource management objectives and improve service to the public. Consolidation of land ownership within Long-Term Management Areas and disposal of lands outside these areas will be considered to meet these objectives. Refer to Map 27 (amended) for potential land disposal and Long-Term Management Areas.

Adjustment Methods - Land ownership adjustments may be accomplished by exchange, sale, state indemnity selection, Recreation and Public Purposes Act, or purchase. No public or private lands will be acquired, exchanged, or disposed of without additional compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and site specific analysis of a proposed action.

Land Acquisition - The following are objectives for land acquisition within Long Term Management Areas:

1. Acquire lands with high public values that compliment existing management programs within Long Term Management Areas.

2. Consolidate ownership pattern within Long-Term Management Areas to improve management efficiency.

3. Improve service to the public.

Lands considered for acquisition will possess one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Riparian habitat
2. Watersheds of important riparian areas
3. High value wildlife habitat, including threatened and endangered species habitat and major migration corridors
4. Administrative sites
5. Land for developed recreation sites
6. Land providing access to public lands
7. Significant cultural and paleontological properties
8. Other lands with high public resource values such as inholdings in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and other types of special management areas

Acquisition Methods - Public lands may be repositioned under the exchange authority of Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Exchanges are negotiated with the state, when authorized by state law, as well as with private landowners. Exchange is the preferred method of land tenure adjustment as it provides an opportunity to acquire desired tracts of non public land as well as dispose of undesirable tracts of public land simultaneously. It also has limited impacts on the private property tax base.

Land purchase is another method of acquisition that is used in this program. Land tenure adjustments utilizing the exchange process are preferred to purchase due to the concern about the loss of private lands and a portion of the tax base to a federal agency.

Acquisition Areas - Land acquisitions will be considered within the 24 designated Long Term Management Areas. (See Table 2-1 and Map #27 amended)

Public Land Disposal - The objectives for disposal of public lands are as follows:

1. Dispose of isolated tracts of public land to improve resource management efficiency and service to the public.

2. Dispose of suitable parcels of public land to facilitate county and city needs for public purposes (parks, landfills, etc.).

3. Dispose of parcels of public land through exchange to acquire lands with higher resource values that meet Bureau management objectives.

4. When lands next to urban areas are disposed of, the resulting boundaries will be manageable, fenceable, and identifiable

5. Prior to disposal, lands will be inventoried and evaluated for significant cultural, threatened and endangered species, and other natural resource values.

6. Access to and across public lands is an issue and will be analyzed during disposal actions. Access across public lands being considered for disposal may be retained by the BLM or transferred to other agencies or individuals. The decision to transfer or retain access will be made during the analysis of specific disposal actions.

The order of preference for disposal will be by (1), exchange, (2), Recreation and Public Purposes Act, (3), sale, and (4), state indemnity selection. All public lands will be disposed of at fair market value, except for lands disposed of under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act or state indemnity selection. Disposals are subject to valid existing rights.

It is Bureau policy not to dispose of public lands encumbered with properly recorded unpatented mining claims. These lands, however, may be disposed of if the mining claims are found to be void, a mining claimant relinquishes the mining claims to the United States, a mining claim is contested and found to be invalid or policy is changed.

Lands identified for disposal will be inventoried for the presence of significant natural and cultural resources, threatened and endangered plants and animals, flood hazards and other critical factors. The actual transfer of the land cannot be finalized until these reviews are complete and National Environmental Policy Act analysis and documentation is complete.

According to The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, all lands not identified for disposal must be retained under federal administration to be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Unforeseen future land management concerns or public demand may necessitate the disposal of other public lands. Such proposals will require this plan to be amended with the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act compliance documentation as part of the amendment.

Disposal Methods - The preferred method of public land disposal is through exchange. This method allows the simultaneous acquisition of desired tracts of land and disposal of undesirable tracts within the state of Arizona.

Appendix 5 (amended) lists the lands that meet the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 criteria for sale. Lands identified for disposal by sale must comply with Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Section 203 states that lands offered for sale must meet one of the following criteria: they are difficult and uneconomical to manage and not suitable for management by another agency; they are no longer needed for the original purpose for which they were acquired; or they will serve an important public purpose. If lands, because of their location or other characteristics, meet one of the above criteria they may be offered for sale. Although these lands qualify for sale, BLM's preferred method of disposal is by exchange or through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. Map 27 (amended) shows tracts of public land available for sale.

State indemnity selection is another method of disposal of public lands. Upon statehood the government granted Arizona four sections of land per township. Much of this land had already been appropriated and, therefore, was unavailable to the state. Other state lands may have been appropriated by federal projects and require compensation to the state. Thus, a "bank" of public lands has accrued to the state from which it may select desired, unappropriated public lands. All public lands identified for disposal will also be available for state selection.

Public land disposal under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Each action will be evaluated utilizing the National Environmental Policy Act process.

Disposal Areas - Public lands outside of the 24 Long-Term Management Areas may be considered for disposal. These public land areas are identified on Map 27 (amended). Public lands qualifying for sale are identified in Appendix 5 (amended). All identified public lands do not have to be disposed of. Unforeseen land management concerns, the presence of significant natural resources, or public concerns raised during the National Environmental Policy Act process may prevent disposal. Public lands that may be considered for disposal are found in the following general areas.

Gila Resource Area

1. Morenci Area (public Lands in and around the Morenci mine)
2. Safford Area (public Lands surrounding Dos Pobres, San Juan, and Lone Star Mines)
3. Fort Thomas area (south of the Gila River)
4. Glenbar/Pima area (Cottonwood Wash area)

San Simon Resource Area

5. York area (tracts near New Mexico border)
6. Artesia area
7. San Simon City area
8. Portal area
9. Dos Cabezas Townsite area
10. San Bernadino Valley area (scattered tracts)
11. Southern Sulfur Springs Valley area (Swisshelm Mountains)
12. Douglas area
13. Texas Canyon area

Tucson Resource Area

14. Tombstone area
15. Bisbee area
16. Red Rock area
17. Friendly Corners area
18. San Xavier area
19. Three Points area
20. Arivaca area

Districtwide

21. All lands previously classified for sale or lease under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act and Sections 203 and 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Recreation and Public Purpose Act Leases/Patents - Recreation and Public Purposes Act applications for public parks, building sites, and other public purposes will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Leases and patents will be issued in accordance with decisions of the approved Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision and evaluated following the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act. New landfills may be authorized under the Recreation and Public Purposes Amendment Act of 1988 upon promulgation of its regulations by the Secretary of the Interior. Land exchanges will not be executed for later conveyance of land under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The no action alternative is taken directly from the existing Safford District Resource Management Plan and the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan. The sections of these documents involved in this amendment are reproduced below.

Safford District Resource Management Plan

Management Concern 2- Lands and Realty

Over the past three years, BLM has been very active in land ownership adjustment, or exchange program. The purpose of the program was to consolidate land ownership to improve resource management and service to the public and to bring into public ownership lands with significant multiple resource values. Over

250,000 acres of state land and large areas of private land have come into public ownership through exchanges or adjustments.

The public lands are used by the private sector for a variety of purposes, including powerlines, oil pipelines and telecommunication sites. Authorization of these activities takes careful planning to ensure that significant adverse impacts to other resource values and uses do not occur. The following questions were analyzed in the planning process:

1. Which public lands should be sold or exchanged to improve BLM land and resource management efficiency and to provide for the future needs of the public and local communities?
2. What types of lands should BLM acquire through purchase or exchange to support its resource management programs (see Appendix 5 amended)?
3. Which lands should be retained in public ownership to be managed for their various values in a combination that will best serve the needs of the public?
4. Which public lands should be designated right-of-way corridors, communication sites, avoidance areas and exclusion areas?
5. What terms and conditions should be applied to right-of-way grants for corridors and communication sites and for uses outside corridors and communication sites?
6. Which existing public land transportation and utility corridors should not be designated as right-of-way corridors upon plan approval?

Land ownership adjustment lands identified for disposal by sale must comply with Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Section 203 states that lands offered for sale must meet one of the following criteria: they are difficult and uneconomical to manage and not suitable for management by another agency; they are no longer needed for the original purpose for which they were acquired; or they will serve an important public purpose. If lands, because of their location or other characteristics, meet one of the above criteria they may be offered for sale (see Appendix 5).

All public lands will be disposed of at fair market value, except for lands disposed of under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act or state indemnity selection. Disposals are subject to valid existing rights.

It is Bureau policy not to dispose of public lands encumbered

with properly recorded unpatented mining claims. These lands, however, may be disposed of if the mining claims are found to be void; a mining claimant relinquishes the mining claims to the United States; a mining claim is contested and found to be invalid; or policy is changed.

State indemnity selection is another method of disposal of public lands. Upon statehood the government granted Arizona four sections of land per township. Much of this land had already been appropriated and, therefore, was unavailable to the state. other state lands may have been appropriated by federal projects and require compensation to the state. Thus, a bank of public lands has accrued to the state from which it may select desired, unappropriated public lands. All public lands identified for disposal will also be available for state selection.

Lands identified for disposal will be reviewed for the presence of significant natural and cultural resources, threatened and endangered plants and animals, flood hazards and other critical factors. The actual transfer of the land cannot be finalized until these reviews are complete.

BLM may acquire lands and interests in lands needed to manage, protect, develop, maintain and use resources on public lands. Land may also be acquired to provide access for public use and enjoyment.

Public lands are often repositioned under the exchange the authority of Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Exchanges are negotiated with the state, as well as with private landowners. Exchange is the preferred method of land disposal, as it provides an opportunity to acquire desired tracts of nonpublic land. Land purchase is the second preferred method of acquisition due in part to the loss of private lands to a federal agency and thereby a portion of the tax base. Condemnation of lands by the government for acquisition under the authority of Public Law 91646 Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 is the least preferred method. Refer to Map 27 for potential land disposal and acquisition areas.

Recreation and Public Purpose Leases/Patents Recreation and Public Purposes applications for public parks, building sites and other public purposes will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Leases and patents will be issued in accordance with decisions of the approved Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision and evaluated following the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act. New landfills may be authorized under the Recreation and Public Purposes Amendment Act of 1988 upon promulgation of its regulations by the Secretary of the Interior. Land exchanges will not be executed for later conveyance of land under the Recreation and Public

Purposes Act.

If this alternative is approved the following objectives and actions will be implemented to resolve the Lands and Realty Management Concern.

1. The following are objectives for disposal of public lands.

. The order of preference for disposal will be by exchange Recreation and Public Purposes Act or sale.

. Isolated tracts of public land may be disposed of to improve resource management efficiency and service to the public.

. When lands next to urban areas are disposed of, the resulting boundaries will be manageable, fenceable and Identifiable

. Prior to disposal, lands will be evaluated for significant cultural and natural resource values.

Dispose of 105,523 acres of public lands in the following areas to accomplish these objectives.

- a. Texas Canyon area
- b. Gila Valley area
- c. El Capitan and southern Pinal Mountain area
- d. Dripping Spring Wash area
- e. Swisshelm Mountain area
- f. Bisbee area, excluding the Juniper Flats block
- g. Tombstone area
- h. Douglas area
- i. Greenlee County Area
- j. San Simon area
- k. Portal area
- l. Recreation and Public Purposes sanitary landfill leases

The public land areas have been identified for disposal by sale or exchange and are within the disposal area identified on Map 27. However all public lands within these areas do not have to be disposed of. Unforeseen future land management concerns or public demand may also necessitate the need for other public lands to be sold or exchanged which are not in the identified disposal area. The parcels considered at that time would be subject to BLM's planning process and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Appendix 5 shows the lands that meet the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 criteria for sale. Although these lands qualify for sale, BLM's preferred method of disposal is by exchange or through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. Map 27 shows where disposals of land may take place.

2. The following are objectives for land acquisition:

- . Acquire lands with high public values that complement existing management programs.
- . Consolidate ownership pattern to improve management efficiency.
- . Improve service to the public.

To accomplish these objectives, acquire State of Arizona and private land in the areas shown on Map 27 if they become available. These lands would have one or more of the following characteristics, generally within or adjacent to public lands shown on the map.

- a. riparian habitat.
- b. watersheds of important riparian areas.
- c. high value wildlife habitat, such as threatened and endangered species areas and major migration corridors.
- d. administrative sites.
- e. Land for developed recreation sites.
- f. Land providing access to public lands.
- g. significant cultural and paleontological properties.
- h. other lands with high public resource values such as in holdings in Area of Critical Environmental Concerns and other types of special management areas.
- i. other private lands that will accomplish BLM's acquisition objectives.

3. According to The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, all lands not identified for disposal must be retained under Federal administration to be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Unforeseen future land management concerns or public demand may necessitate the disposal of other public lands. Such proposals will require this plan to be amended with the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act compliance documents as part of the amendment.

Phoenix District Resource Management Plan

Issue 1: Land Tenure Adjustment

Land Tenure Adjustment is the major RMP issue. The BLM in Arizona is currently involved in a large-scale state and private exchange program designed to block up land ownerships for more efficient management. To resolve this issue the BLM would need to design a long-term land tenure adjustment - program for the RMP area.

All land identified as suitable for disposal by sale in this Proposed RMP meets the criteria set forth in Sec. 203 (a)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 which states that "...such tract because of its location or other

characteristics is difficult and uneconomical to manage as part of the public land and is not suitable for management by another federal department or agency."

All land would be disposed of at fair market value, excluding land disposed of to local governments under the Recreation and Public Purpose Act (R&PPA). All disposals would be subject to valid existing rights.

The BLM's ability to dispose of land identified for sale or exchange in this Proposed RMP/FEIS may be constrained by the existence of withdrawals. Not all withdrawals preclude the disposal of the withdrawn land, but in most cases, the BLM would not dispose of withdrawn land until the withdrawal designation has been lifted. FLPMA Sec. 204 (k) (1) requires that all withdrawals affecting public land be administratively reviewed by 1991. Land that becomes unencumbered through the withdrawal review process will then come under the guidance of recommendations made in an approved RMP/FEIS.

Currently, it is BLM policy not to dispose of public land encumbered with properly recorded unpatented mining claims. However, disposal actions under sections 203 and 206 of FLPMA and the Act of June 14, 1926, as amended, may occur if: 1) the mining claims are found to be void due to failure by the claimant to comply with Sec. 314 of FLPMA, 43 USC 1744 (1982) and 43 CFR 3833.2-1, 2) the mining claimant relinquishes the mining claims to the United States, 3) the mining claim is contested and found to be invalid or 4) a change in current policy allows for the disposal of public land encumbered with mining claims.

In addition, any land identified for disposal would be evaluated for significant cultural resources, threatened and endangered plants and animals, floodplain/flood hazards and prime and unique farmland before actual transfer of the land is completed.

Under the Proposed RMP, the BLM would consolidate ownership and intensively manage land in seven Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs). Maps 2-1 through 2-3 provide an overview of the RCAs being proposed. More detailed drawings of the RCAs are shown in the map section at the end of this chapter (see Maps 2-4 through 2-10). Altogether the seven RCAs contain 49 percent (437,476 acres) public land (surface estate), 38 percent (330,814 acres). State land and 13 percent (121,194 acres) private land (Table 2-1). The BLM would retain all public land (surface and subsurface estate) within the seven RCAs and pursue the acquisition of all state land through the BLM-State of Arizona exchange program. Private land within the RCAs is not specifically identified for acquisition; however, exchange proposals initiated by the private owners within these RCAs would receive consideration by the BLM. Outside the RCAs, 6,880 acres adjacent to Petrified Forest National Park and 615 acres adjacent

to the Tucson Mountain District of Saguaro National Monument would be retained pending Congressional action to include any of these parcels in the U.S. Park System. A total of 23,600 acres outside the RCAs would also be retained to be included in the Cooperative Recreation Management Areas proposed under Issue 5 - Recreation Management.

Also outside the RCAs, 391,803 acres of public land (surface estate) have been identified as suitable for disposal through the state indemnity selection program or state or private exchange. An additional 45,000 acres have been identified as suitable for disposal through state indemnity selection, state or private exchange or sale.

All land identified as meeting the FLPMA criteria for disposal by sale is identified by tract in Appendix I of the draft RMP/EIS.

All disposal land lies outside the RCAs. The land is mostly scattered parcels exhibiting few or low natural resource values. However, some of the identified land has a high economic value and is being identified for exchange so that it may be used to consolidate public ownership within the RCAs. The BLM may use some of the disposal land to acquire land outside the RMP area but within Arizona; however, the blocking up of the RCAs within the RMP area would receive priority.

Under the Proposed RMP, the BLM would consolidate surface and subsurface ownership through the acquisition by exchange of nonfederal mineral estate underlying federal surface holdings. Within the RCAs. Cooperative Recreation Management Areas (CRMAs) and Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) leases, the BLM would retain all federal subsurface mineral estate and acquire through exchange all nonfederal subsurface estate underlying that land.

The Proposed RMP also identifies for disposal all subsurface mineral estate that underlies federal surface estate identified for disposal. Therefore, under this alternative, all subsurface mineral estate outside the RCAs, CRMAs and R&PP land would be made available for disposal.

Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PPA). Under the R&PP Act. the BLM has the authority to lease or patent public land to governmental or nonprofit entities for public parks, building sites, correction centers or for other public purposes. R&PPA leases and patents would be issued in accordance with the recommendations in this RMP.

To ensure public purpose development of public land slated for R&PPA transfer, the BLM may require that land first be leased for a period of time prior to issuing a patent.

Public Land Not Included In This RMP/EIS

In June 1988 the BLM in Arizona made a decision to acquire, by exchange, 41,000 acres of private land within the Empire and a Cienega ranches southeast of Tucson within the Phoenix 1 Resource Area. The acquisition was made at the urging of members of Arizona's congressional delegation representing the area. The ranches contain numerous important natural resources which would benefit from being protected and managed in public ownership. Although the acquisition was accomplished too late for the land to be included in this RMP/EIS, it is anticipated that development of a land use plan for the area will begin in 1989. The resulting plan will become an amendment to the Phoenix RMP. See Appendix 2 in this document for a description of the ranches and for the interim management guidance which will be in force until the land use plan for the ranches is completed.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment is thoroughly presented on pages 125 - 160 of the Safford District Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement - Final. This portion of the Resource Management Plan is incorporated in this environmental assessment by reference. The general setting is presented here as it appears in the Resource Management Plan.

General Setting:

The following section describes the resources that may be affected by implementing any of the alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative. Descriptions are only as detailed as needed for the reader to understand the effects of implementation. Where impacts are slight or nonexistent (climate, topography, natural history) descriptions are brief or omitted. More detailed descriptions of the resources in the planning area are available at the Safford District office. Additional details on some of the resources may be found in the Appendix section of the Safford District Resource Management Plan.

The Safford District is located in southeastern Arizona. See the Safford District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement area map for the location of the District and its boundaries. The planning area for this Resource Management Plan includes all public lands administered by BLM within the District boundary.

The Resource Management Plan area lies within the Basin and Range Physiographic Province south of the Colorado Plateau. The area's northwesterly trending mountain ranges reach elevations of nearly 11,000 feet and are separated by broad, flat or gently sloping basins. The Gila Mountains and the mountainous area near Clifton represent the transition zone between the Colorado Plateau and

the Basin and Range Provinces. Among the numerous topographic units are the San Simon, Gila, Sulfur Springs and San Pedro valleys and the Peloncillo, Dos Cabezas, Gila, Santa Teresa, Chiricahua, Mescal, Galiuro, Dragoon and Mule Mountains.

The entire District is drained by the Gila River and its tributaries with the exception of three areas. These three areas are on the south side of the Dos Cabezas Mountains, the Sulfur Springs Valley and the San Bernardino Valley in the extreme southeastern part of the District.

Climatic conditions in the planning area are similar to those throughout the desert Southwest. Alternating lowlands and mountains create abrupt climatic changes over short distances. Higher elevations have cooler temperatures and more precipitation than valleys. Summer days are hot (often above 100 degrees) but usually not unbearable. Average minimum winter temperatures in the higher elevations fall below freezing, and snow is common. Winters in the valleys are relatively mild. Annual precipitation averages 7 to 16 inches in the valleys and 15 plus inches in the mountains, with most of the rainfall in the late summer. Dry conditions are most common from April to July and less severe in the fall. Long, severe droughts occur irregularly and usually last two to five years.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Scoping/Screening Session Date: A Notice of Intent to amend the Safford District Resource Management Plan was published in the Federal Register on December 9, 1993. A news release was mailed to over 1,450 individuals and organizations on the Safford District Resource Management Plan mailing list. A public scoping meeting was held at the Safford District Bureau of Land Management office on January 5, 1994. Twenty-four people attended this meeting. Fifteen comment letters were received by the close of the comment period from members of the public. The following issues were identified in the scoping process by the public or BLM staff and are analyzed in this document.

Issues Identified in Scoping:

1. Public access
2. Wildlife habitat
3. Threatened and endangered species
4. Upland vegetation
5. Riparian areas
6. Tax base

Issues Considered but not analyzed:

The following issues were identified in scoping but will not be analyzed further:

1. Several members of the public identified specific tracts of public land that they were interested in acquiring. They requested that these parcels be considered for disposal. Bureau of Land Management personnel have reviewed these specific tracts of public land for potential disposal. The parcels that are outside of the Long-Term Management Areas and meet the requirements of federal law, and the Safford District BLM resource management objectives for disposal are included the disposal areas identified in the proposed action. Tracts that did not meet these requirements are included in long-term management areas.

2. During scoping the Arizona Game and Fish Department and members of the public raised concerns about the impacts of disposing of several tracts of public land. The proposed action was modified to respond to these concerns by deleting these tracts from consideration for disposal or reducing their size.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACTS

PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action consolidates and modifies decisions made in the Safford and Phoenix Districts Resource Management Plans. The proposed action identifies additional public lands that may be considered for disposal. This action will allow the BLM to consider several exchanges that may benefit wildlife, threatened and endangered species, riparian areas, and the counties tax base.

Environmental impacts on the issues identified in scoping will not occur until the disposal, exchange or acquisition is completed. The environmental consequences of individual land actions will be identified, analyzed and mitigated in environmental assessments or environmental impact statements before any public lands change ownership.

The following analysis of issues identified in scoping assumes that a significant amount of public land, identified for potential disposal on map #27 (amended), is actually disposed of. It also assumes that BLM follows the procedures and meets the objectives for acquisition and disposal identified in the proposed action.

Public Access

The Bureau is committed to providing access to the public lands in the Safford District. The Bureau may retain access rights-of-ways across lands considered for disposal and acquire access across state and private lands to provide access to the public lands. This issue will be addressed in the analysis of individual exchange, acquisition and disposal actions. The proposed action is not expected to have adverse impacts on access

to ~~or across~~ the public lands in the Safford District.

Wildlife Habitat

The repositioning of public lands in the Safford District is expected to benefit wildlife by acquiring riparian and other high natural resource value lands while disposing of lands less valuable to wildlife populations.

Some species such as bighorn sheep, deer and javalina may suffer minor impacts through habitat loss while many others, such as Neotropical migratory birds, native fish, and many riparian dependent species, will benefit from the long-term protection of habitat associated with federal ownership of these areas. Wildlife habitat impacts will be analyzed and mitigated as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process for individual land actions.

Acquisition of conservation easements or implementation of cooperative management agreements are also expected to benefit wildlife habitat even though the land remains in private ownership. Implementing the proposed action will allow consideration of several exchanges that may have benefits to wildlife.

Implementing the proposed action may accelerate the repositioning of federal lands in the District and is expected to have positive impacts on wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Prior to disposal, public lands will be inventoried for the presence of threatened and endangered species. Public lands with populations of these species or that contain designated "critical habitat" will not be disposed of except in the case of an exchange that analysis indicates will benefit these species or their habitat. The proposed action is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on threatened and endangered species in the Safford District. In fact the repositioning of federal lands may have beneficial impacts by bringing into federal ownership riparian areas and other high resource value lands that are more likely to provide habitat for these species than the areas considered for disposal. Acquisition of conservation easements and the implementation of cooperative management agreements is also expected to benefit these species.

Upland Vegetation

Repositioning of federal lands in the District may dispose of some public lands that support a variety of upland vegetation communities and acquire other lands with similar communities. The preference for repositioning through land exchanges is likely to lead to the disposal and acquisition of similar acreages of the various communities. There will probably be a small net loss of upland acreage and a net gain of riparian acreage as

exchanges, sales and acquisitions occur. The loss of relatively small acreages of upland vegetation communities is expected to have insignificant adverse impacts on upland vegetation.

Riparian Areas

Disposal actions would have an insignificant impact on riparian systems since very little riparian area would be removed from BLM management. Acquisitions of state or private riparian acreage is expected to bring a net increase in the riparian acreage under BLM management.

Riparian areas are expected to benefit through the long-term management and protection afforded by federal ownership, the acquisition of conservation easements, and the implementation of cooperative management agreements. Repositioning of federal lands in the District is expected to lead to an increase in the acreage of riparian areas under BLM administration. The high natural resource values associated with these lands make them prime acquisition prospects within the Long-Term Management Areas. Implementing the proposed action will allow consideration of several exchanges that may have benefits to riparian areas.

Tax Base

Repositioning of federal lands in the District is expected to have insignificant adverse impacts on the tax base. Several lines of reasoning led to this conclusion:

1. More public land in the District is identified for disposal than private land identified for acquisition.
2. The preference for exchanges rather than purchase will allow the repositioning of lands without impacting the tax base.
3. The identification of additional public lands for disposal in the proposed action are more likely to be consummated and will benefit the tax base.
4. The consideration of acquisition of less than "fee simple title" will have less impact on the tax base. The development of existing private lands and the change in the uses of these lands are expected to have a much larger impact on the tax base than federal acquisition of private land or disposal of public lands. Identification of additional public lands for disposal in Graham, Greenlee, and Cochise counties may have a small beneficial impact on the tax base in these counties.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The no action alternative incorporates decisions made in the Safford and Phoenix Districts Resource Management Plans. Since land exchanges with the state are currently considered against state law and no private land exchanges are proposed for lands considered for disposal, under the existing Resource Management Plan, the rate at which federal land is repositioned is likely to be very slow. This situation will delay any impacts from the repositioning of federal land in the District for an unknown amount of time.

Public Access

The Bureau is committed to providing access to the public lands in the Safford District. The Bureau may retain access rights-of-ways across lands considered for disposal and acquire access across state and private lands to provide access to the public lands. This issue will be addressed in the analysis of individual exchange, acquisition and disposal actions. The no action alternative is not expected to have adverse impacts on access to the public lands in the Safford District.

Wildlife Habitat

Land acquisitions would provide high benefits to wildlife by providing more land under BLM management. Acquisitions under the no action alternative include lands with high wildlife resource values. Benefits to wildlife habitat are not expected until significant amounts of federal land are repositioned.

Threaten and Endangered Species

These species will benefit through the acquisition of high natural resource value lands that are likely to contain suitable habitat. These benefits will not occur until habitat is actually acquired.

Upland Vegetation

Repositioning of federal lands in the District may dispose of some public lands that support a variety of upland vegetation communities and acquire other lands with similar communities. The preference for repositioning through land exchanges is likely to lead to the disposal and acquisition of similar acreages of the various communities. There will probably be a relatively small net loss of upland acreage and a net gain of riparian acreage as repositioning occurs. The removal of relatively small acreages of upland vegetation communities from federal ownership is expected to have insignificant adverse impacts on upland vegetation.

Riparian Areas

Disposal actions would have an insignificant impact on riparian systems since less than 25 acres of riparian areas would be removed from BLM management. Acquisitions of state or private riparian acreage is expected to bring a net increase in the riparian acreage under BLM management.

Riparian areas are expected to benefit through the long term management and protection afforded by federal ownership. The high natural resource values associated with these lands make them prime acquisition prospects. Riparian areas may benefit from the implementation of the no action alternative as these areas become BLM administered public lands.

Tax Base

The private land tax base of some counties in the District would

suffer very small adverse impacts from the transfer of some lands from private to federal ownership. The preference for exchanges and the amount of public land identified for disposal in these counties is expected to limit the impacts to the tax base. Impacts are expected to be insignificant. The development of existing private lands and the change in the uses of these lands are expected to have a much larger impact on the tax base than federal acquisition of private land or disposal of public lands.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Proposed Action: The proposed action is expected to have beneficial cumulative impacts on wildlife and threatened and endangered species by extending long term federal protection to additional high quality upland and riparian habitat these species depend on in the Safford District. Protection of habitat may be accomplished through land owner education, cooperative management agreements, acquisition of conservation easements, or acquisition of "fee simple title". The proposed action is likely to accelerate the rate of the repositioning of federal land in the Safford District. This will result in the protection of riparian areas, and other crucial habitat at an earlier date. These additions are expected to be a small but significant portion of the remaining habitat in The state of Arizona.

The proposed action will provide and maintain access to BLM public lands in the District. No adverse statewide cumulative impacts are anticipated with implementation of the proposed action.

The identification of additional public lands for disposal combined with the possibility of more rapid repositioning of public lands may have a minor positive impact on the tax base of the several counties in the District. On a statewide basis this impact is expected to be insignificant. Change of use and development of private land in the state is expected to have a much larger impact on the tax base than the acquisition of private land and the disposal of federal land.

No Action Alternative: Impacts from implementing the No Action Alternative are expected to occur slowly since the repositioning of federal land will probably occur slowly. This alternative is expected to have beneficial cumulative impacts on wildlife and threatened and endangered species by extending long term federal protection to additional high quality upland and riparian habitat these species depend on in the Safford District. Over time this may result in the protection of additional riparian areas, and other crucial habitat. These additions are expected to be a small but significant portion of the remaining habitat in The state of Arizona.

The proposed action will provide and maintain access to BLM public lands in the District. No adverse statewide cumulative impacts are anticipated with implementation of the proposed action.

The identification of public lands for disposal may have a minor positive impact on the tax base of the several counties in the District as land disposals are completed. On a statewide basis this impact is expected to be insignificant. Changes in the use of and development of private land in the state is expected to have a much larger impact on the tax base than the acquisition of private land and the disposal of federal land.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Additional public land disposals would cause the permanent loss of public use of those lands. Natural resources associated with these lands would also be lost to the public.

MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL IMPACTS

No specific mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce the impacts of implementing the proposed action. Mitigation will be incorporated when BLM begins implementing specific actions in this amendment. At that time an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared to analyze the impacts of each project and identify needed mitigation measures to deal with those impacts.

PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Dave Walker	Supervisor Habitat Evaluation Program Habitat Branch
Joan Scott	Habitat Program Manager (Tucson Regional Office)
Sharen Adams	Habitat Program Manager (Region I)

Local Government

Joe Carter	Graham County Manager
James Vlahovich	Cochise County Planning Director

Phelps Dodge Corporation

Rick Mohr	Environmental Services Supervisor
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Gila Resource Area

Margaret Jensen	Area Manager
Al Bammann	Wildlife Biologist
Scott Evans	Realty Specialist
Steve Knox	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Bill Brandau	Supervisory Range Conservationist
Clay Templin	Range Conservationist
Hana West	Hydrologist
Gay kinkade	Archaeologist

Tucson Resource Area

Jesse Juen	Area Manager
John Gaudio	Realty Specialist
Karen Simms	Wildlife Biologist
Jeff Simms	Fishery Biologist
Don Ducote	Planning and Environment

San Pedro Staff

Jack Whetstone	Wildlife Biologist
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San Simon Resource Area

Lynn Saline	Area Manager
Darlene Haegele	Realty Specialist
Jim Gacey	Wildlife Biologist

District Manager's Staff

Tom Terry	Non-Renewable Resource Advisor
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Preparer(s): Mike McQueen

Date: July 21, 1994

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA

The following table is a consolidation of Appendix 1 of the draft Phoenix Resource Management Plan and Appendix 5 of the Final Safford District Resource Management Plan. Only Phoenix District lands that were transferred to the Safford District are included.

The following public lands because of their location or other characteristics, meet at least one of the following disposal criteria under Section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976: they are difficult and uneconomical to manage and not suitable for management by another agency; they are no longer needed for the original purpose for which they were acquired; or they will serve an important public purpose.

Although they qualify for sale, the preferred method for disposal is by exchange or Recreation and Public Purposes Act lease/patent.

These parcels identified for disposal are not to be considered all-inclusive. Unforeseen future land management concerns or public demand may necessitate the need for other public lands not within the disposal areas to be sold or exchanged. The parcels considered at that time will be subject to the same BLM planning process and National Environmental Policy Act as those identified in this document.

Phoenix District Lands Transferred to the Safford District

Township	Range	Section(s)	Acres	Area
T. 5 S.	R. 4 E.	13	160	South of Gila River Indian Res.
T. 5 S.	R. 6 E.	23	160	South of Gila River Indian Res.
T. 5 S.	R. 8 E.	34	21.29	North of Randolph
T. 5 S.	R. 2 E.	28,33	600	Northwest of Stanfield
T. 6 S.	R. 2 E.	9,25,27	757.56	West of Stanfield
T. 6 S.	R. 3 E.	33	480	Southwest of Stanfield
T. 6 S.	R. 10 E.	30	121	East of Picacho Reservoir
T. 7 S.	R. 10 E.	14	320	Southeast of Picacho Res.
T. 6 S.	R. 13 E.	1	80.23	West of Dudleyville*
T. 6 S.	R. 14 E.	4,5	414.01	West of Dudleyville*
T. 6 S.	R. 13 E.	25	520	Near Black Mtn.
T. 7 S.	R. 13 E.	27,34	200	Near Black Mtn.
T. 7 S.	R. 14 E.	6 30	685.79	Near Black Mtn.
T. 8 S.	R. 14 E.	9 15	480	Near Black Mtn.
T. 7 S.	R. 4 E.	10,15,21,27,28, 30,31,34,35	3,200	South of Stanfield
T. 7 S.	R. 6 E.	26	80	North of Arizona City
T. 8 S.	R. 10 E.	27,34,35	280	East of Newman Peak
T. 8 S.	R. 12 E.	6,18 19,26,32,33	982.64	Northwest of Oracle Jct.
T. 10 S.	R. 6 E.	30,31	957.72	South of Sawtooth Mountains**
T. 11 S.	R. 6 E.	3,5 6,7,10	2,234.35	South of Sawtooth Mountains**
T. 10 S.	R. 7 E.	12,13,24	1,880	South of Friendly Corners
T. 10 S.	R. 9 E.	17	40	West of Red Rock
T. 10 S.	R. 12 E.	19,21,22,30	987.48	North of Tortolita Mountains
T. 12 S.	R. 10 E.	23	40	Southwest of Marana
T. 12 S.	R. 11 E.	25,33	861.16	North of Saguaro Nat. Monument
T. 13 S.	R. 11 E.	5,29	195	Northwest of Saguaro Nat. Monument
T. 13 S.	R. 12 E.	9,28,33,34	457.48	East of Saguaro National Monument
T. 14 S.	R. 11 E.	4	40	South of Saguaro National Monument
T. 16 S.	R. 9 E.	1	138.96	Three Points
T. 16 S.	R. 10 E.	5,6,17	239.02	Three Points
T. 16 S.	R. 11 E.	4,35	1,345.61	West & South of Yavapai Indian Res.

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Phoenix District Lands Transferred to the Safford District

Township	Range	Section(s)	Acres	Area
T. 16 S.	R. 18 E.	22	200	Near Pantano
T. 18 S.	R. 15 E.	10,11,14, 15,22,23	1,034.125	Near Santa Rita Mountains
T. 18 S.	R. 17 E.	7,8,17,18	457.70	Empire Mountains
T. 18 S.	R. 17 E.	1	23.67	South of Pantano
T. 19 S.	R. 7 E.	35	30.97	East of Baboquivari Mountains
T. 20 S.	R. 7 E.	3,10,11,21	561.42	East of Baboquivari Mountains
T. 20 S.	R. 9 E.	23,24,25,26	796.32	Las Guijas Mountains
T. 20 S.	R. 10 E.	15,16,17,22, 25,30,31,36	2,820.45	Las Guijas Mountains
T. 21 S.	R. 10 E.	4,5,6,7,8, 17,18,19	2,232.47	Las Guijas Mountains
T. 20 S.	R. 14 E.	31	79.48	Southeast of Amado
T. 21 S.	R. 9 E.	27,34	650.996	Southwest of Arivaca
T. 22 S.	R. 10 E.	24	80	Near Oro Blanco
T. 23 S.	R. 14 E.	18	16.06	North of Nogales

Source: Phoenix District files.

Original Safford District Lands

Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 2 S., R. 14 E.,
Sec. 7, NE1/4NE1/4 excluding mineral patent;
Sec. 31, lots 1 and 2, NE1/4NW1/4.

T. 2 S., R. 15 E.,
Sec. 20, lot 1, S1/2NE1/4, N1/2SE1/4,
SE1/4SE1/4, unpatented mineral survey;
Sec. 29, lots 5, 9,10-13 incl., E1/2NE1/4,
N1/2SE1/4, unpatented mineral survey in N1/2 and W1/2;
Sec. 31, NE1/4, N1/2SE1/4.

T. 3 S., R. 29 E.,
Remaining public land in
Sec. 32
Sec. 35
Sec. 36.

T. 4 S., R. 28 E.,
Remaining public land in
Sec. 12, E1/2NE1/4 (within).

T. 4 S., R. 29 E.,
Remaining public land in
Sec. 1
Sec. 2
Sec. 3
Sec. 4
Sec. 6, S1/2S1/2 (within);
Sec. 7
Sec. 8

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 4 S., R. 29 E.,
Remaining public land in
Sec. 10
Sec. 11
Sec. 12
Sec. 18
Sec. 29, NE1/4NW1/4 (within).

T. 5 S., R. 23 E.,
Sec. 9, NE1/4NE1/4;
Sec. 11, E1/2NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4;
Sec. 13, W1/2SW1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4SW1/4.

T. 5 S., R. 29 E.,
Sec. 12 Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4, NE1/4NW1/4, N1/2 Lot 5,
N1/2SE1/2 Lot 5, N1/2 Lot 6, SE1/4 Lot 6, N1/2SW1/4 Lot 6,
N1/2 Lot 7, SW1/4 Lot 7, W1/2SW1/4 Lot 7, N1/2NW1/4 Lot 10,
NW1/4NE1/4 Lot 10, N1/2NE1/4 Lot 11, NW1/4NW1/4,
N1/2SE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4SE1/4NW1/4,
SW1/4SE1/4SE1/4NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2SE1/4SW1/4NW1/4

T. 6 S., R. 16 E.,
Sec. 27, unplotted parcel in SE1/4NW1/4.

T. 6 S., R. 17 E.,
Sec. 7, south of San Carlos boundary.;
Sec. 8, south of San Carlos boundary.

T. 6 S., R. 22 E.,
Sec. 26, all south of San Carlos boundary.

T. 6 S., R. 24 E.,
Sec. 9, E1/2SW1/4.

T. 6 S., R. 25 E.,
Sec. 8, S1/2NE1/4SE1/4;
Sec. 13
Sec. 14
Sec. 24
Sec. 25, N1/2, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4
Sec. 26, N1/2SE1/4
Sec. 22, SE1/4NE1/4;
Sec. 25, SW1/4SW1/4NW1/4;
Sec. 26, N1/2NW1/4NE1/4, E1/2SW1/4NW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4NE1/4

T. 6 S., R. 26 E.,
Sec. 31, Lots 1-3, 5-6, 9, 12, 15,16
Sec. 32, Lot 5, NE1/4, N1/2SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4
Sec. 33, Lots 1-12, Lots 15,16

T. 6 S., R. 27 E.,
Sec. 33, all
Sec. 34, N1/2, SW1/4, N1/2SE1/4
Sec. 35, Lot 4, N1/2NE1/4, NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4
Sec. 36, Lots 7, 8, NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4

T. 6 S., R. 28 E.
Sec. 31, Lot 1-5

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 6 S., R. 30 E., Sec. 1,	lots 14, 18, 22;
T. 7 S., R. 16 E., Sec. 10, Sec. 11, Sec. 12, Sec. 13, Sec. 14, Sec. 15,	lot 7, SE1/4SE1/4; S1/2S1/2; S1/2SW1/4; N1/2NW1/4, E1/2SE1/4NW1/4; N1/2N1/2, W1/2SW1/4NW1/4; lot 12, NE1/4NE1/4.
T. 7 S., R. 27 E., Sec. 1, Sec. 4, Sec. 7, Sec. 8, Sec. 9, Sec. 21,	Lots 1 through 3, SE1/4NE1/4 lots 1-5 incl., S1/2N1/2, SW1/4; lots 1 and 2, NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4; lots 1, 2, 3, NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4; lots 14-19 incl.; N1/2SW1/4NE1/4.
T. 7 S., R. 31 E., Sec. 34, Sec. 35,	E1/2NE1/4SE1/4, W1/2NE1/4SE1/4; NW1/4NW1/4SW1/4.
T. 8 S., R. 16 E., Sec. 21, Sec. 24, Sec. 29,	NW1/4; E1/2NE1/4; SE1/4SW1/4.
T. 8 S., R. 17 E., Sec. 19,	E1/2SW1/4 (R&PP).
T. 8 S., R. 26 E., Sec. 20, Sec. 21, Sec. 29,	lots 1 and 2; E1/2NE1/4NE1/4, W1/2NW1/4SW1/4 lots 17, 19, 20, 21, N1/2NW1/4NE1/4, W1/2E1/2NW1/4.
T. 8 S., R. 31 E., Sec. 11, Sec. 35,	E1/2NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4; E1/2E1/2.
T. 8 S., R. 32 E., Sec. 9, Sec. 10, Sec. 30,	E1/2SE1/4; W1/2SW1/4; W1/2NW1/4SE1/4.
T. 12 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 2, lot 5; Sec. 23, lot 1; Sec. 24, lot 1; Sec. 25, lot 1, 2.	
T. 12 S., R. 29 E., Sec. 29,	SE1/4SW1/4.
T. 13 S., R. 30 E., Sec. 26, Sec. 35,	E1/2NE1/4SE1/4, N1/2SE1/4SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4SE1/4, W1/2SE1/4SE1/4SE1/4; SE1/4.

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 13 S., R.31 E., Sec. 20, Sec. 29, Sec. 31,	SW1/4SW1/4; W1/2NW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4; lot 2.
T. 14 S., R. 30 E., Sec.11, Sec. 13,	E1/2SE1/4; NE1/4.
T. 14 S., R. 32 E., Sec. 19,	lot 4.
T. 15 S., R. 27 E., Sec. 3, Sec. 11,	SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4; SW1/4NE1/4.
T. 15 S., R. 28 E., Sec. 4,	W1/2NE1/4SW1/4.
T. 16 S., R. 22 E., Sec. 1, Sec. 2, Sec. 3, Sec. 4, Sec. 8, Sec. 9, Sec. 10, Sec. 13, Sec. 17, Sec. 18, Sec. 21, Sec. 23,	S1/2SW1/4, SW1/4SE1/4 excluding mineral patent; lots 12, 13, 14 excluding mineral patent, NW1/4NW1/4NW1/4 excluding mineral patent; lots 5,8,9,10,14-18 incl.; lot 5, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4; N1/2SW1/4,SW1/4SW1/4, NW1/4SE1/4; SW1/4SW1/4; lots 1 and 2, SW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4SW1/4; lot 7, N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4 excluding mineral patent; SW1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, SE1/4; lot 4, N1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4; W1/2NW1/4; lot 5, MS 2356;
T. 16 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 4, Sec. 6, Sec. 23,	SE1/4NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4; lots 7 and 8; MS 586.
T. 16 S., R.27 E., Sec. 30, Sec. 31, Sec. 34,	SE1/4SE1/4; NE1/4NE1/4; SE1/4NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4.
T. 16 S., R. 30 E., Sec. 14,	SW1/4NE1/4.
T. 17 S., R. 31 E., Sec. 5,	SE1/4SE1/4.
T. 17 S., R. 32 E., Sec. 6,	lot 2.
T. 18 S., R. 25 E., Sec. 4, Sec. 5,	lot 4; lots 1, 10, 11;

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 19 S., R. 22 E., Sec. 34,	SE1/4SE1/4SW1/4NE1/4, S1/2NW1/4SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2SE1/4NE1/4, N1/2SW1/4SE1/4NE1/4, SW1/4SW1/4SE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4SW1/4SE1/4NE1/4, NW1/4NW1/4NE1/4SE1/4, NE1/4NE1/4NW1/4SE1/4.
T. 19 S., R. 24 E., Sec. 4, Sec. 9, Sec. 12, Sec. 13, Sec. 14,	lot 4; SW1/4NE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4; lots 1, 2, 3; lots 1-9 incl.; lot 2, MS 2738;
T. 19 S., R. 25 E., Sec. 20,	lots 1-8 incl., SW1/4NW1/4, W1/2SW1/4, unpatented mineral survey;
T. 19 S., R. 27 E., Sec. 17,	SW1/4SW1/4.
T. 19 S., R. 28 E., Sec. 4,	lot 4.
T. 20 S., R. 22 E., Sec. 11, Sec. 14,	lots 1 - 18 lots 1-20
T. 21 S., R. 22 E., Sec. 3,	lot 3.
T. 21 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 7, Sec. 8,	SE1/4SE1/4; NW1/4NW1/4.
T. 22 S., R. 21 E., Sec. 15, Sec. 20,	SE1/4NE1/4; E1/2NW1/4.
T. 22 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 4,	SW1/4SE1/4.
T. 22 S., R. 26 E., Sec. 8, Sec. 19,	SW1/4SE1/4; SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2SE1/4.
T. 22 S., R. 28 E., Sec. 23, Sec. 30,	SW1/4NW1/4; lot 5;
T. 22 S., R. 29 E., Sec. 24, Sec. 31,	NW1/4NE1/4; SE1/4SE1/4.
T. 23 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 8, Sec. 9, Sec. 28,	lot 2; lot 5; SE1/4NE1/4.

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA

Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 23 S., R. 25 E.,
Sec. 4, NW1/4SW1/4;
Sec. 5, NE1/4SE1/4;
Sec. 10, SE1/4NE1/4.

T. 23 S., R. 27 E.,
Sec. 28, NW1/4SW1/4.

T. 23 S., R. 28 E.,
Sec. 10, SE1/4NE1/4;
Sec. 11, N1/2NW1/4.

T. 24 S., R. 25 E.,
Sec. 1, E1/2NE1/4SE1/4, NE1/4SE1/4SE1/4;
Sec. 12, SE1/4NE1/4NE1/4, W1/2NE1/4NE1/4;
Sec. 14, lots 1, 2, 3;
Sec. 17, SE1/4SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4;
Sec. 20, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 21, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 22, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 23, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 24, lots 1-4 incl.

T. 24 S., R. 26 E.,
Sec. 6, lots 6, 7, E1/2SW1/4, NW1/4SW1/4SE1/4;
Sec. 19, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 20, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 21, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 22, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 23, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 24, lots 1-4 incl.

T. 24 S., R. 28 E.,
Sec. 11, SE1/4NE1/4, N1/2NW1/4NW1/4, W1/2SW1/4;
Sec. 13, E1/2NW1/4;
Sec. 22, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 23, lots 1-4 incl.;
Sec. 24, lots 1-4 incl.

T. 24 S., R. 29 E.,
Sec. 1, SW1/4NE1/4;
Sec. 5, SE1/4SW1/4, SE1/4SE1/4;
Sec. 6, E1/2NE1/4;
Sec. 15, W1/2;
Sec. 17, SE1/4, E1/2SW1/4;
Sec. 19, lots 1-10 incl.;
Sec. 20, lots 1-8 incl.;
Sec. 21, lots 1-8 incl.;
Sec. 22, lots 1-8 incl.;
Sec. 23, lots 1-8 incl.;
Sec. 24, lots 1-8 incl.

APPENDIX 5 (amended)
RMP AREA LAND MEETING FLPMA SALES CRITERIA
Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona

T. 24 S., R. 30 E.,
Sec. 19, lots 1-8 incl;
Sec. 20, lots 1-8 incl;
Sec. 21, lots 1-8 incl;
Sec. 22, lot 2.

Source the Safford District Files

Environmental Assessment Checklist

EA No. AZ-040-04-12

The following checklist is to be completed by persons submitting data for inclusion into the EA. Those submitting input are EA Team Members.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS		AFFECTED		MAJOR ISSUES		AFFECTED	
Subject		YES	NO	Subject		YES	NO
ACECs *			X	Access		X	
Air Quality *			X	Engineering			X
Cultural Res *			X	Hydrology			X
Flood Plains *			X	Land Use			X
Haz/Materials *			X	Outdoor Recreation			X
Native American Religion *			X	Paleontology			X
Prime/Unique Farmland *			X	Range			X
Solid Waste *			X	Soils/Geology			X
T&E Animal *	X			Vegetation	X		
T&E Plant *	X			Water Rights			X
Visual Resource *			X	Wildlife	X		
Water Quality *			X	Other			
Wetland/Riparian *	X			Tax Base	X		
Wilderness *			X				
Wild&Scenic Rivers *			X				

* Critical Elements Required by Federal Laws

NEPA requirements adequately met:

Mike McGreen

Environmental Coordinator

July 21, 1994
Date

RESPONSES TO COMMENT LETTERS

Six comment letters were received on the draft Resource Management Plan Amendment for Safford District. The Six letters are from:

1. Cochise County Planning Department
2. Anna M. Magoffin
3. Josephina Bianes Melendrez
4. Arizona Game and Fish Department
5. Tucson Audubon Society
6. Warner and Wendy Glenn

The following responses are offered to comments made in these letters.

1. Cochise County Planning Department

Thank you for your comment. The Bureau of Land Management will provide the Cochise County Planning Department with the final environmental assessment as soon as it is completed.

2. Anna M. Magoffin

Concern 2-1.

You expressed a concern that your ranch and state lease land was included in a Long-Term Management Area and would be subject to acquisition by the Bureau.

Response 2-1.

The Bureau of Land Management has reviewed your concerns about the inclusion of your ranch and state lease land in a Long-Term Management Area. We have decided that including these lands is not appropriate at this time. Map #27 has been changed to reflect this decision.

Concern 2-2.

You question whether the public lands located in sections 20, 21, and 22 T.24S., R.30E. have already been exchanged with the State of Arizona.

Response 2-2.

The status of these lands have been reviewed by a Bureau Realty Specialist. These public lands have never been identified for inclusion in an exchange with the State of Arizona. They remain in public ownership and are identified for potential disposal in the current Safford District Resource Management Plan.

3. Josephina Bianes Melendrez

Concern 3-1.

The lands considered for disposal in the RMP amendment would benefit the mining industry, the State of Arizona, and

municipalities to such an extent as to be discriminatory.

Response 3-1.

One purpose of the RMP amendment is to satisfy community expansion needs. The BLM invited all parties, both individuals and organized entities, to reveal their needs. All proposals were considered and served to the best of our ability. If an individual's or entity's land acquisition needs were not represented in this RMP amendment, it is because the lands were not identified in the scoping process or disposal of the land would be inconsistent with other laws or policies.

Concern 3-2.

The lands considered for disposal in the RMP amendment are located in areas of high minority populations, areas of unincorporated communities, and areas of unequal opportunity.

Response 3-2.

The BLM is aware of and sensitive to the issue of "Environmental Justice" as it is defined in the Executive Order No. 12898 which was recently enacted by President Clinton. The Executive Order requires each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

Through this RMP amendment process, the BLM is attempting to assist individuals, industries, and communities with their ever increasing need for growth and improved quality of life. In our assessment, such growth will enhance the human health and environment of the areas found in proximity to the proposed BLM disposal areas. As a further protection, site specific Environmental Assessments and/or Environmental Impact Statements will be conducted on all specific disposal actions to ensure in part, that minority populations and low-income populations are protected from any adverse human health or environmental effects.

4. Arizona Game and Fish Department

Concern 4-1

Discrepancies between Appendix 5 and Map #27.

Response 4-1

Appendix 5 and Map #27 have been reviewed and the appropriate changes have been made. In some cases the parcel of land listed in Appendix 5 is so small that it is not represented on Map #27.

Concern 4-2

The department identifies public access as an issue that is potentially affected by the disposal of specific parcels of public lands. The department lists six areas identified for potential

disposal in this document that raise significant access concerns.

Response 4-2

The Bureau is committed to maintaining and improving access to and across public lands. The Bureau may retain access rights-of-ways across public lands or transfer them to other agencies or individuals as part of a disposal action. The Bureau will address the access issue during the analysis of individual disposal actions. Specific language to this effect has been added to this document. Please see No.6 on page 5.

Concern 4-3

The department describes an agreement between Phelps Dodge and the department that satisfies the wildlife habitat concerns on public lands around the Morenci mine identified for potential disposal. The department also describes public lands in this area on which no agreement with Phelps Dodge was reached.

Response 4-3

The Bureau concurs with the agreement between Phelps Dodge and the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Map #27 has been changed to reflect this agreement.

For the public lands in this area on which Phelps Dodge and the department could not agree the Bureau believes they should be considered for disposal for the following reasons.

1. These sections of land are inaccessible, difficult to manage.
2. The BLM recognizes the potential loss of big horn sheep habitat in these two sections. During the environmental analysis process, 17 sections of land have been withdrawn from further consideration for disposal to benefit bighorn sheep. The BLM believes that the decision to dispose of public lands in these two remaining sections should be based on the analysis of resource values of these lands and the lands offered for exchange. There may be an opportunity to acquire lands of greater resource value.
3. Local and national economies would strengthen if these lands could be utilized for the growth and expansion of the Phelps Dodge Morenci mine.

Concern 4-4

The department expressed various resource concerns about eight areas in the Tucson Resource Area.

Response 4-4

All eight of these areas involve public lands transferred to Safford District from the Phoenix District. The decisions concerning land tenure for these lands were made in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan that was approved in 1989. The

intent of this amendment regarding these lands is to incorporate the decisions made for these lands in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan into the Safford District Resource Management Plan. These decisions were not reanalyzed or changed in any way. This intent has been clarified in the Purpose and need section of this document. Please see No.3 page 1. The Tucson Resource Area will consider these issues during the planning process for the resource area.

5. Tucson Audubon Society

Concern 5-1.

The Society identifies certain lands in the Tucson Resource Area they believe should be retained in public ownership.

Response 5-1.

The lands in question were transferred to the Safford District from the Phoenix District. The decisions concerning land tenure for these lands were made in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan that was approved in 1989. The intent of this amendment regarding these lands is to incorporate the decisions made for these lands in the Phoenix District Resource Management Plan into the Safford District Resource Management Plan. These decisions were not reanalyzed or changed in any way. This intent has been clarified in the Purpose and need section of this document. Please see No.3 page 1.

Concern 5-2.

The Society identifies certain lands in the Tucson Resource Area they believe should be acquired by the Bureau.

Response 5-2.

Please refer to response 5-1. The Tucson Resource Area will consider these issues during the planning process for the resource area.

6. Warner and Wendy Glenn

Concern 6-1.

You expressed a concern that a neighboring ranch and state lease land was included in a Long-Term Management Area and would be subject to acquisition by the Bureau.

Response 6-1.

The Bureau of Land Management has reviewed your concerns about the inclusion of the neighboring ranch and state lease land in a Long-Term Management Area. We have decided that including these lands is not appropriate at this time. Map #27 has been changed to reflect this decision.

ATTACHMENT 1

MAP 27 (AMENDED)